



THIS PAGE: Bret, Andrea, and Emi Swan. **OPPOSITE:** Swan Fish Camp at dusk.

BY MELINDA NELSON

SWAN LAKE

A CONTEMPORARY HOME ON MILLE LACS LAKE MAKES A CHARMING GETAWAY FOR AN ARCHITECT AND HER FAMILY.

For anyone who has ever wondered whether architects live in homes as beautiful as the ones they design for clients, Andrea Swan is living proof that indeed they do. And Swan's 2-year-old daughter, Emi, is testament to the fact that the cobbler's child really does have (cute) shoes, as well as a wardrobe of striped sailor shirts like her mother.

Around International Market Square, Andrea cuts a slim, chic figure. Dressed simply in one of her trademark striped sailor shirts, narrow khakis or white jeans, and Birkenstocks or clogs in chartreuse, red, or yellow, Andrea's fashion

sense is as clean, fresh, and classic as her designs. The Swan Architecture studio on the fifth floor reflects her taste for streamlined, modern furniture and carefully chosen accessories, with a white sheer curtain, a large, striking black-and-white photo, shelves full of design books, a monkey's fist made of rope, and several awards, including a Residential Architects Vision and Excellence (RAVE) award from AIA Minnesota for Swan Fish Camp, the Mille Lacs Lake getaway she designed for her family.

Until Andrea and her husband, Bret, decided to build a cabin of their own, fishing opener weekend was an annual

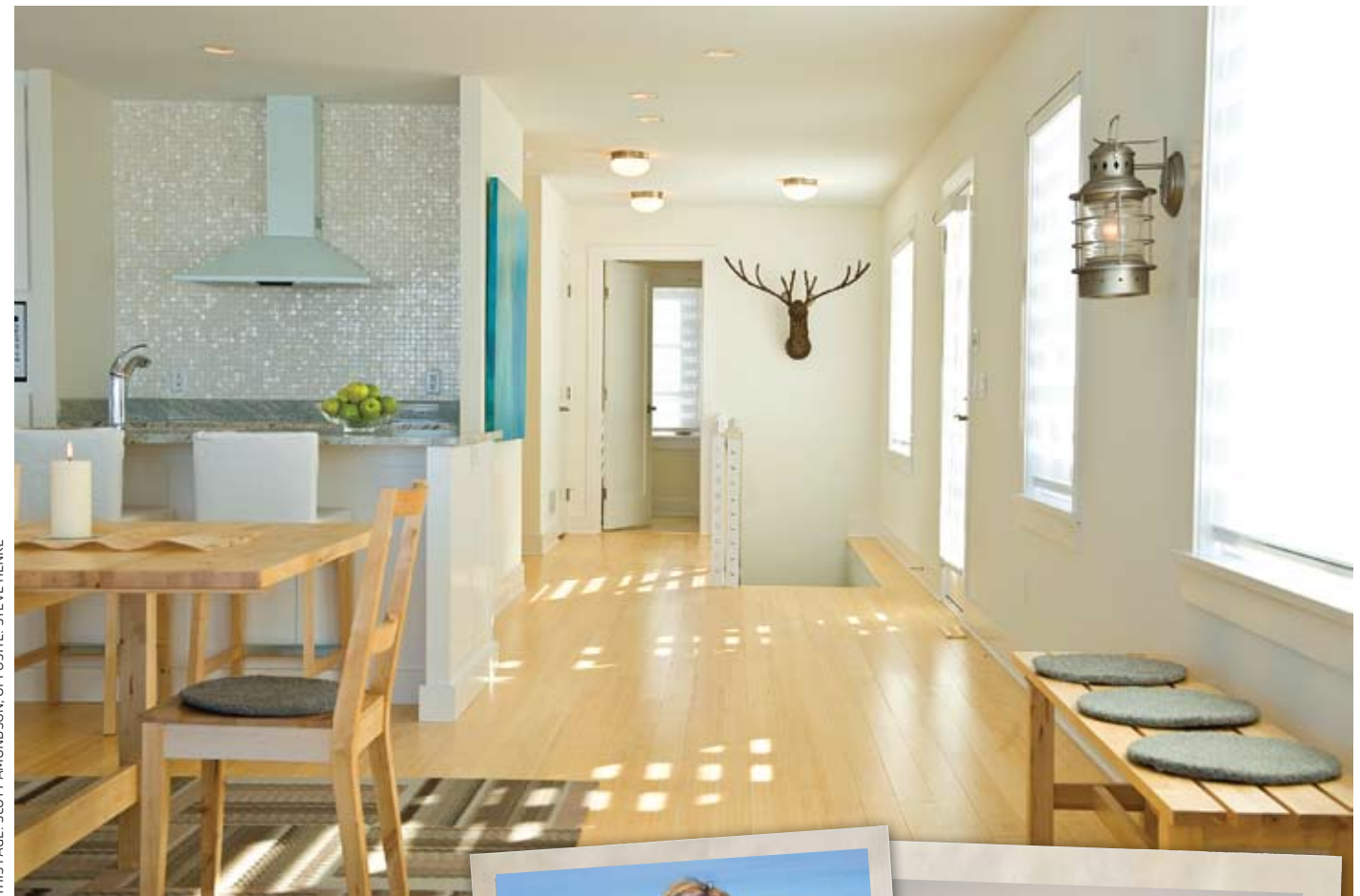
THIS PAGE: PHOTO BY SCOTT AMUNDSON; OPPOSITE: PHOTO BY STEVE HENKE





THIS PAGE: The marlin is a replica of one that Bret caught and released in Cabo San Lucas.

THIS PAGE: SCOTT AMUNDSON; OPPOSITE: STEVE HENKE



challenge. “Fishing is a big part of our family, and we all really enjoy it,” says Andrea. “But, we’d always rent a doublewide trailer, and it’s always Mother’s Day, and I used to dread it.” For Andrea and her family, salvation came in the form of a south-facing lot, just north of Isle. When it came time to design the house, Andrea regarded her family as her clients. “While Bret and I both loved the idea of a luxurious Swiss chalet, our budget precluded it. Instead, I showed Bret how we could create something that was much more unique, and take it to its fullest,” says Andrea.

Andrea’s client agreed with her recommendation, and she designed a simple, contemporary house to take advantage of the sunlight and the views. The resulting home with its white siding and navy blue steel roof is as simple as one of Andrea’s outfits, and extraordinarily compelling because of its familiar, welcoming shape. “We all know this form. It’s universal,” says Andrea. “It’s a doghouse, a ship vessel, and a chapel. It’s uplifting and very spiritual.”

Bret is thrilled with the results. “Andrea’s vision started out different than mine, but the outcome is better than anything I could have envisioned,” he says. “I absolutely love it. It’s not your typical, run-of-the-mill cabin and it’s not like any-



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Bret tiled the wall in the kitchen. • Sunset from Swan Fish Camp. • Andrea with her prize catch before she let it go.

thing else on this lake.” The neighbors find Swan Fish Camp equally fascinating. Come Fourth of July, as family, friends, and neighbors gather for the annual chicken fry, the festivities always include a tour of the Swans’ home.

Swan’s smallest client is also delighted with her family’s getaway. Between fishing with her parents, uncles, aunts, and cousins, and throwing “boulders” into the lake, Emi is in a constant state of bliss. For Andrea, her family’s happiness is her greatest reward. “Bret and Emi constantly inspire me to laugh, smile, love, and embrace fun, which in turn influences my designs and how I work. A happy process leads to happy clients, which leads to a happy home.”



Swan sited the house to take full advantage of the views of Mille Lacs Lake.

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ANDREA'S PICKS

ARTIST

◀ **Leonardo da Vinci**

ARCHITECTS

Andrea Palladio, Thomas Jefferson, Julia Morgan, Frank Gehry



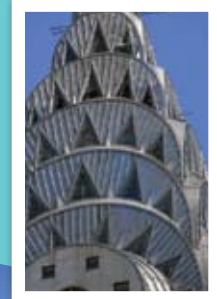
MUSEUM
Weisman Art Museum

RESTAURANT

Bar Lurcat

BUILDINGS

Chrysler Building ▶
New York; Santa Maria della Salute, Venice

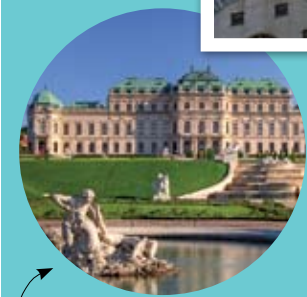


SHOWROOMS

Holly Hunt, Rich Rosenberg

STORES

Burberry, J. Crew, Lands' End, J. Jill, Hanna Andersson, Room & Board



CITIES

Vienna, Park City, Rome, New York, and Minneapolis

BOOK

Vogue Living: Houses, Gardens, People ▶



MAGAZINES

Vanity Fair, *Mpls.St.Paul Magazine*